



U. S. Department of Justice

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PRESS STATEMENT
***OGDEN GANG MEMBER GETS 10 YEARS
IN FEDERAL PRISON FOR FIREARM
CONVICTION***

***USED ILLEGAL WEAPON IN CONNECTION
WITH SHOOTING INCIDENT IN OGDEN***

SALT LAKE CITY – Ricky Ray Crespín, age 25, an admitted Ogden Trece gang member, will serve a 10-year federal prison sentence after a jury convicted him of possessing a firearm following a felony conviction. During a Wednesday afternoon hearing, U.S. District Judge Tena Campbell sentenced Crespín to the maximum sentence possible after considering his violent criminal history and his use of the firearm in connection with a shooting.

Crespín was indicted in March 2007 after witnesses saw him fire a handgun at a passing car in Ogden and officers found him in possession of the firearm moments later. Witnesses described the shooter to police who were quickly able to locate and stop a minivan driving away from the area of the shooting. While a subsequent search of the vehicle was being conducted, Crespín reached back into the vehicle through a broken window

saying he wanted to get his sweater. He then dropped it back in the van. Although officers told him not to reach into the van again, he made the same movement a few moments later. Officers soon found a handgun under a coat on the middle bench seat where Crespin had been sitting and near the broken window. Witnesses later identified him as the shooter they had seen earlier.

Crespin went to trial in federal court in December and was convicted of possessing a Jennings Model J-22 handgun following a felony conviction.

Crespin was prosecuted in federal court as a part of Utah Project Safe Neighborhoods, an anti-gun violence initiative that brings together local, state, and federal law enforcement and prosecution resources to target gun violence in Utah. The Ogden Police Department has been an active participant in the Utah Project Safe Neighborhoods Task Force, an operational component of PSN efforts in Utah. The Weber County Attorney's Office has cross-designated three prosecutors as Special Assistant U.S. Attorneys which allows them to prosecute gun crimes from Ogden in federal court.

"This case is a perfect example of what we are accomplishing in Utah as a part of our Project Safe Neighborhoods effort. Thanks to good police work by the Ogden Police Department and witnesses who were willing to step forward, Mr. Crespin will be spending the next 10 years in federal prison rather than disrupting the peace and quiet of our neighborhoods," U.S. Attorney Brett L. Tolman said today. "Mr. Crespin understands now that we are very serious when we say gun crime means hard time in Utah."

Since Utah PSN began in March 2000, 100 individuals from the Ogden area have been prosecuted in federal court on firearms violations. The average sentence for the 77 defendants who have been convicted so far has been 35 months. There is no parole in the federal criminal justice system.

"The Crespin case is an example of the successful partnership between law enforcement agencies in Utah at the state, local, and federal levels. With this conviction and sentencing, law enforcement jointly sends the message that violent criminals will be held accountable for firearms crimes," Assistant Ogden Police Chief Wayne Tarwater said today.

“The Ogden Police Department appreciates our involvement with Project Safe Neighborhoods and the U.S. Attorney’s Office. As a local law enforcement agency, we take a hard stance on gang violence and will continue to work in conjunction with PSN for more stringent penalties. This case clearly demonstrates that we do have a strong partnership and together we can accomplish our goals of keeping our communities safe,” Tarwater said.

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